

Factors of Affecting the Development of Tourism in Uzbekistan in the Example of China and the USA

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Abstract

Uzbekistan has great potential for the development of the tourism industry. Over the past three years, tourism in the country, as one of the main areas of reform and economic growth, has increased fivefold. While about 1 million tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2016, this figure rose to 2.7 million in 2017 and over 5.3 million in 2019. By 2025, the number of foreign tourists is expected to rise to 7 million, and annual foreign exchange receipts from foreign visitors will reach \$2 billion. In addition, the article discusses the factors influencing the development of tourism in Uzbekistan. Tourism is a significant source of income, employment, contributes to the diversification of the economy, creating industries that serve this area. In addition, tourism is an essential factor in the implementation of the foreign policy of the state.

1. Introduction

Today, Uzbekistan's tourism sector continues to face challenges. These include poor transport and payment systems, lack of adequate hotels, medical services, language assistance and information for tourists. Uzbekistan can increase its tourism potential by strengthening cooperation with other countries and international organizations. In addition, Uzbekistan should explore its cultural and natural attractions and invest in advertising to raise awareness of these areas. In order to properly use its tourism resources, Uzbekistan also needs to improve infrastructure construction, as well as stimulate entrepreneurship and other private sector activities to realize the country's tourism potential [1].

The resource potential of Uzbekistan allows, with an appropriate level of development of the tourist infrastructure, to increase the reception of foreign tourists several times. regional development

refers to the development of other countries around the economic growth of one country.

2. Main part

Last year, the tourism sector of Uzbekistan served more than 9.4 percent of foreign citizens who visited Uzbekistan in 2018 came to their relatives and friends. The second largest segment of respondents is 33.6%, who answered that the purpose of visiting Uzbekistan was vacation, leisure and recreation. The next group of respondents (9.1%) arrived in Uzbekistan for business and professional purposes. 5.7% of respondents noted that they arrived for treatment and wellness procedures, and another 5.4% - for shopping.

According to the company's press service, the volume of tourist services provided in 2018 exceeded the figures for 2017 by 6%, the export of tourist services doubled and amounted to \$546.9 million in 2017, and in 2018 - \$1,041 million. Tourism has a

huge impact on such key sectors of the economy as transport and communications, construction, agriculture, production of consumer goods and others, i.e. acts as a kind of catalyst for socio-economic development. In turn, the development of tourism is influenced by various factors: demographic, natural-geographical, socio-economic, historical, religious and political and legal. The economic development of tourism is characterized by impressive data on the world economic market. They show that tourism is the most dynamically developing industry in many countries of the world and that its role in the world economy is constantly growing. According to the company's press service, the volume of tourist services provided in 2018 exceeded the figures for 2017 by 6%, the export of tourist services doubled and amounted to \$546.9 million in 2017, and in 2018 - \$1,041 million.

At the end of 2018, about 5.3 million foreign tourists visited the republic. The measures taken to support and protect the private sector contributed to an increase in the number of tourist organizations from 398 in 2015 to 950 in 2018, hotel facilities from 661 to 900 units. In recent years, major investment projects have been implemented to develop tourism infrastructure, including the opening of branded hotels "Hyatt Regency Tashkent" and "Lotte City Hotel Tashkent Palace" in the city of Tashkent, the creation of cultural and entertainment parks in the cities of Andijan, Urgench, Tashkent, the opening railway line "Angren-Pap", electrified railway lines of high-speed trains to the cities of Bukhara, Karshi, Shakhrisabz and Khiva. Among the respondents who arrived for vacation, leisure and recreation, the largest part is made up of citizens of Kazakhstan - 17.2%, the Russian Federation - 10.4%, Kyrgyzstan - 8.5%, China - 7.7%, Turkmenistan - 6.8%, France - 5.9%, Tajikistan - 5.8%, India - 5.7%, Italy - 4.9%.

The analysis shows that the majority of non-CIS citizens come to Uzbekistan for leisure and recreation. Thus, respondents - citizens of Hong Kong - all noted that they arrived for vacation, leisure and recreation. This indicator in relation to respondents from Australia is 89.4%, the Netherlands - 87.1%, Italy - 86.3%, France - 85.1%, Great Britain - 84.9%, Germany - 80.2%, USA - 78.2%, China - 75%, South Korea - 70.3%. Of interest is also the survey data regarding visits to religious sites and pilgrimages. The main part of the respondents who arrived in Uzbekistan in the direction of ziyorat tourism are citizens of Turkmenistan - 33.9%. In general, in this direction, citizens of the countries of Central Asia

(Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and the Russian Federation account for 65.1% of the total number of respondents. Citizens of countries in the Asia-Pacific region account for 15.6%, Europe - 12.8% and the Middle East region - 6.4%.

Factors influencing the development of tourism in Uzbekistan:

- created a single unified system of tourist navigation, tourist information centers, a bank of information materials; □

- transport and road infrastructure is being developed: tourist buses are being launched, parking lots, autotourist clusters on key routes of national importance, roadside hotels are being built; □

- railway carriages, domestic aircraft, tourist buses, entertainment facilities (attractions, equipment for culture and recreation parks), funiculars, cable cars, railway stations and bus stations have been updated;

- Stimulate small and medium businesses in the hospitality sector (mini-hotels, mini-hotels, hostels, guest houses), develop national/foreign hotel chains; □

- For regions not included in the cluster, as well as at district levels, identify promising tourism products, in particular, develop agro-tourism and build rural holiday homes, conduct excursions and festivals in border areas for guests from neighboring countries.

Uzbekistan, which has enormous historical, archaeological, architectural and natural wealth, has an exceptional potential for tourism. The diverse ecology of the country, from deserts to glaciers, from mountains to steppes, gives the country a huge potential for ecotourism. Ecotourism opportunities in Uzbekistan are numerous and distinctive. These include eight state reserves (201.7 thousand hectares), three national parks (598.7 thousand hectares), a biosphere reserve (68.7 thousand hectares), a natural center for breeding wild animals (158.9 thousand hectares) and ten monuments nature (3.7 thousand hectares). Located on the ancient Silk Road, Uzbekistan has more than 4000 historical and architectural monuments, it is a carefully preserved and precious spiritual heritage and more than 7000 historical monuments. They include famous ancient cities included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Shakhrisabz. Moreover, Uzbekistan is a country with strong Islamic roots [1]. Uzbekistan has paid considerable attention to the development of tourism since independence in 1991. An important initial step was the creation of the national company "Uzbektourism"

by Presidential Decree in 1992. Uzbektourism was responsible for developing a national tourism development model; including coordination of tourism organizations, training, encouragement of investments in the creation of a material and technical base and industry infrastructure. Uzbekistan joined the UN World Tourism Organization in 1993. In addition to this, on August 20, 1999, the regulatory framework for tourism was adopted based on the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan Airways was also founded by the President on January 28, 1992. Today, Uzbekistan Airways is the second largest airline in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after the Russian Aeroflot [3]. Cooperation with foreign partners Collaboration with foreign governments, multilateral organizations and the foreign private sector plays an important role as Uzbekistan re-intensifies its efforts to open itself to international tourism [2]. In 2018, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development launched the Integrated Cultural Heritage Framework in Uzbekistan - Khiva/Khorezm Oblast (the "Framework") to finance sovereign, sub-sovereign and private sector projects in various sectors to support regional development in general. A holistic approach in using cultural heritage resources as a driving force. On June 28, 2018, with the help of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), President Sh. Mirziyoyev signed the Resolution on the establishment of the Silk Road International Tourism University. The purpose of this resolution is to organize a system for training professional personnel and carry out research and creative work in the field of international tourism. The secondary goal is the further development of historical, cultural and humanitarian ties between the SCO member states. Deputy Prime Minister Aziz Abdukhakimov noted the importance that Uzbekistan attaches to China as a source of tourism, and Uzbekistan expects the number of Chinese tourists to increase. To this end, Uzbekistan invites travel agencies to get acquainted with the country and its sights. These expectations are another reason why Uzbekistan is actively participating in the China Belt and Road Initiative. In addition, the United States Forest Service (USFS), which is part of the USDA, has been working in Uzbekistan since 2015 to promote better natural resource management. The USFS has provided extensive technical support for the development of nature tourism by laying trails and providing recreational trainings [2].

In order to attract more investment in this sector, the first International Tourism Investment Forum was held in November 2018. It was attended by over 300 delegates, experts and business leaders from 48 countries and regions. The discussions were devoted to ways of expanding international cooperation, investments and methods of promoting tourism projects. The participation of international companies such as Booking, Airbnb and Trip Advisor has greatly improved the quality and convenience of travel in Uzbekistan. Such participation also created more employment opportunities [3]. However, in order to increase tourism revenue, Uzbekistan must fully support and use the private sector. The travel and tourism industry is made up of many commercial and non-profit organizations that work together to provide goods and services to tourists [3]. Therefore, the government should give more space to the private sector, especially foreign partners who have more experience and capital. At the same time, foreign private sector entities should explore the opportunities they have, from facilities such as hotels, shopping malls and restaurants, to services such as travel agencies, taxis and online boat services, as well as obtaining and accommodation booking. In addition, beautiful and varied Uzbek handicrafts and local agricultural and food products are very popular among foreign tourists. The private sector can help, in addition to creating and providing such goods and services, also provide a standardized system of distribution channels to increase profits and foreign exchange earnings. Another benefit to the growing role of the private sector in Uzbekistan's tourism industry is the promotion of women's empowerment and promotion of gender equality in Uzbek society [4].

3. Conclusion

Among the important factors in the development of tourism in Uzbekistan are the recreational and resource potential of the territory, expressed in the quantity and quality of natural, cultural and historical resources. It should be borne in mind that the impact of the recreational resource potential is also mediated by socio-economic factors and primarily depends on the size and nature of the recreational needs of the population. No less important is the factor of geographical location, which appears in all major varieties: physical-geographical, economic-geographical, transport-geographical, geopolitical and ecological-geographical position. Effective advertising and information campaigns are also important to attract

tourists. The government can open social media accounts or invite world famous tourism programs/personalities to work in Uzbekistan and introduce the country to foreign media consumers. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of Chinese travelers around the world, who spent \$277.3 billion in 2018. To attract Chinese tourists in particular, Uzbekistan should look to its local social networks, including Weibo and WeChat, to post promotional material or advertisements on their largest online travel service, Ctrip.

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